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Economic and environmental questions: Sustainable development

Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/1, the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the United Nations system, has the honour to submit the report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The report provides a global overview of the current situation of the Goals, on the basis of the latest available data for indicators in the global indicator framework.[a]

[a] The report was submitted on 10 May 2017 because of new data updates from a few international organizations.

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Introduction

1. The present report, mandated by the General Assembly in paragraph 83 of its resolution 70/1 on transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, informs the high-level political forum on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The report is prepared annually by the Secretary-General in cooperation with the United Nations system. It is based on a global indicator framework developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, which was adopted by the Statistical Commission at its forty-eighth session, held in March 2017 (see E/2017/24, chap. I, sect. A, and annex II).

2. The report provides an overview of global progress towards the 17 Goals of the 2030 Agenda, on the basis of a selection of indicators for which data were available as of April 2017. Some targets are not reflected at this stage, owing to the lack of data, or because they are measured by indicators that are still undergoing methodological development. For most indicators presented in the report, values represent global, regional and subregional aggregates. They are calculated from data from national statistical systems, compiled by international agencies, on the basis of their respective mandates and specialized expertise. The national data are often adjusted for international comparability and, where lacking, estimations are made by international agencies.[1]

3. The composition of regions and subregions in the present report is based on United Nations geographical regions, with some modifications necessary to create, to the extent possible, groups of countries for which aggregates are meaningful.[2] Although the aggregated figures presented are a convenient way to track progress, the situation of individual countries within a given region may vary significantly from regional averages. A supplementary document (English only) that contains the statistical annex for the report and a database of available global, regional and country data and metadata for the Sustainable Development Goals indicators is available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs.

4. The availability of high-quality, timely and disaggregated data is vital for evidence-based decision-making and to ensure accountability for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Tracking progress on the Sustainable Development Goals requires an unprecedented amount of data and statistics at all levels, which poses a major challenge to national and international statistical systems. The global statistical community is working to modernize and strengthen statistical systems to address all aspects of the production and use of data for sustainable development.

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

5. Despite the fact that the global poverty rate has been halved since 2000, intensified efforts are required to boost the incomes, alleviate the suffering and build the resilience of those individuals still living in extreme poverty, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa. Social protection systems need to be expanded and risks need to be mitigated for disaster-prone countries, which also tend to be the most impoverished.

[1] Additional information pertaining to the indicators presented in the present report, availability of data and methodological development of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators, and the full list of contributing organizations are available at: http://unstats.un.org/sdgs.

[2] Details of the regional groupings used in the present report are available at: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups/.

- In 2013, an estimated 767 million people lived below the international poverty line of $1.90 a day — down from 1.7 billion people in 1999. That figure reflects a decrease in the global poverty rate from 28 per cent in 1999 to 11 per cent in 2013. The most significant progress was seen in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, where the rate declined from 35 per cent in 1999 to 3 per cent in 2013. In contrast, 42 per cent of people in sub-Saharan Africa continued to subsist in conditions of extreme poverty in 2013.

- In 2016, just under 10 per cent of the world's workers were living with their families on less than $1.90 per person per day, down from 28 per cent in 2000. In the least developed countries, nearly 38 per cent of workers in 2016 were living below the poverty line.

- Social protection systems are fundamental to preventing and reducing poverty and inequality at every stage of people's lives, through benefits for children, mothers with newborns, persons with disabilities, older persons and those persons who are poor and without jobs. Preliminary data show that in 2016, only 64 per cent of the world's population was effectively protected by a social protection system and that coverage varied widely across countries and regions.

- In 2016, 68 per cent of people above retirement age received a pension and more than half of people with severe disabilities collected disability benefits. However, that global average masks large regional differences. In Oceania, excluding Australia and New Zealand, and in sub-Saharan Africa, only 5 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively, of people above retirement age received a pension in 2016.

- Other vulnerable groups lack social protections as well. In 2016, only 28 per cent of unemployed individuals worldwide received unemployment benefits and only 34 per cent of women giving birth received maternity benefits.

- Building the resilience of the poor and strengthening disaster risk reduction is a core development strategy for ending extreme poverty in the most afflicted countries. Economic losses from disasters are now reaching an average of $250 billion to $300 billion a year. Disaster risk globally is highly concentrated in low- and lower-middle-income countries. In relation to the size of their economies, small island developing States have borne a disproportionate impact.

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

6. Efforts to combat hunger and malnutrition have advanced significantly since 2000. Ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition for all, however, will require continued and focused efforts, especially in Asia and Africa. More investments in agriculture, including government spending and aid, are needed to increase capacity for agricultural productivity.

- The proportion of undernourished people worldwide declined from 15 per cent in 2000-2002 to 11 per cent in 2014-2016. About 793 million people are undernourished globally, down from 930 million people during the same period.

- In 2016, an estimated 155 million children under 5 years of age were stunted (too short for their age, a result of chronic malnutrition). Globally, the stunting rate fell from 33 per cent in 2000 to 23 per cent in 2016. Southern Asia and

sub-Saharan Africa accounted for three quarters of all stunted children that year.

- In 2016, an estimated 52 million children under 5 years of age worldwide suffered from wasting (with a low weight for their height, usually the result of an acute and significant food shortage and/or disease). The global wasting rate in 2016 was 7.7 per cent, with the highest rate (14.8 per cent) in Central and Southern Asia. At the other end of the spectrum, overweight and obesity affected 41 million children under 5 years of age worldwide (6 per cent) in 2016.

- Ending hunger demands sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices. One aspect of that effort is maintaining the genetic diversity of plants and animals, which is crucial for agriculture and food production. In 2016, 4.7 million samples of seeds and other plant genetic material for food and agriculture were preserved in 602 gene banks throughout 82 countries and 14 regional and international centres — a 2 per cent increase since 2014. Animal genetic material has been cryoconserved, but only for 15 per cent of national breed populations, according to information obtained from 128 countries. The stored genetic material is sufficient to reconstitute only 7 per cent of national breed populations should they become extinct. As of February 2017, 20 per cent of local breeds were classified as at risk.

- Increased investments are needed to enhance capacity for agricultural productivity. However, the global agriculture orientation index — defined as agriculture's share of government expenditure divided by the sector's share of gross domestic product (GDP) — fell from 0.38 in 2001 to 0.24 in 2013 and to 0.21 in 2015.

- The share of sector-allocable aid allocated to agriculture from member countries of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) fell from nearly 20 per cent in the mid-1980s to 7 per cent in the late 1990s, where it remained through 2015. The decline reflects a shift away from aid for financing infrastructure and production towards a greater focus on social sectors.

- In 2016, 21 countries experienced high or moderately high domestic prices, relative to their historic levels, for one or more staple cereal food commodities. Thirteen of those countries were in sub-Saharan Africa. The main causes of high prices were declines in domestic output, currency depreciation and insecurity. Localized increases in fuel prices also drove food prices higher.

- Some progress has been made in preventing distortions in world agricultural markets. The global agricultural export subsidies were reduced by 94 per cent from 2000 to 2014. In December 2015, members of the World Trade Organization adopted a ministerial decision on eliminating export subsidies for agricultural products and restraining export measures that have a similar effect.

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

7. Since 2000, impressive advancements have been made on many health fronts. However, to meet the Sustainable Development Goals health targets by 2030, progress must be accelerated, in particular in regions with the highest burden of disease.

Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health

- In 2015, the global maternal mortality ratio stood at 216 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. Achieving the target of less than 70 maternal deaths by 2030 requires an annual rate of reduction of at least 7.5 per cent, more than double the annual rate of progress achieved from 2000 to 2015. Most maternal deaths can be prevented. In 2016, 78 per cent of live births worldwide benefited from skilled care during delivery, compared to 61 per cent in 2000. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, the rate in 2016 was only 53 per cent of live births.

- The mortality rate for children under 5 years of age globally was 43 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015. That rate represents a 44 per cent reduction since 2000. Mortality among children under 5 years of age remains high in sub-Saharan Africa, with a rate of 84 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015.

- Children are most vulnerable in the first 28 days of life (the neonatal period). In 2015, the global neonatal mortality rate was 19 deaths per 1,000 live births, a decrease from 31 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000. Neonatal mortality is highest in Central and Southern Asia and in sub-Saharan Africa, at 29 deaths per 1,000 live births in each of those regions in 2015.

- Preventing unintended pregnancies and reducing adolescent childbearing through universal access to sexual and reproductive health care is crucial to the health and well-being of women, children and adolescents. In 2017, 78 per cent of women of reproductive age (15 to 49 years of age) worldwide who were married or in union had their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods, up from 75 per cent in 2000. Progress has been substantial in the least developed countries, with a rise of 18 percentage points from 2000 to 2017.

- Globally, childbearing among adolescents 15 to 19 years of age declined by 21 per cent from 2000 to 2015; in Northern America and Southern Asia, it dropped by more than 50 per cent. However, the adolescent birth rate remains high in two thirds of all countries, with more than 20 births per 1,000 adolescent girls in 2015.

Infectious diseases

- Major advances have been made in combating infectious diseases. Globally in 2015, there were 0.3 new HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) infections per 1,000 uninfected people; among children under 15 years of age, there were 0.08 new HIV infections. That data represents a decline of 45 per cent and 71 per cent, respectively, since 2000. The incidence of HIV infection remained highest in sub-Saharan Africa, with 1.5 new infections per 1,000 uninfected people in 2015.

- In 2015, 10.4 million new cases of tuberculosis were reported worldwide, which represents 142 new cases per 100,000 people, or a decline of 17 per cent since 2000. The global malaria incidence rate in 2015 was 94 per 1,000 people at risk, a 41 per cent decrease since 2000. In 2015, 1.6 billion people required mass or individual treatment and care for neglected tropical diseases, a 21 per cent decline from 2010.

- Around 1.34 million deaths were attributed to hepatitis in 2015, including 0.9 million deaths owing to hepatitis B. Hepatitis B can be prevented through vaccinations; global coverage of vaccinations for that disease among children 1 year of age increased from 29 per cent in 2000 to 84 per cent in 2015.

- A major risk factor for infectious diseases and mortality is the lack of safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, which disproportionately affects sub-Saharan Africa and Central/Southern Asia. Death rates owing to the lack of WASH services in those two regions were 46 and 23 per 100,000 people, respectively, compared to 12 per 100,000 people globally in 2012.

Non-communicable diseases and mental health

- Premature deaths (before 70 years of age) owing to cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease or diabetes totalled about 13 million in 2015, accounting for 43 per cent of all premature deaths globally. From 2000 to 2015, the risk of dying between 30 and 70 years of age from one of those four causes decreased from 23 per cent to 19 per cent, falling short of the rate required to meet the 2030 target of a one-third reduction.
- Such mental disorders as depression can lead to suicide. Nearly 800,000 suicides occurred worldwide in 2015, with men about twice as likely to commit suicide as women.
- Tobacco and alcohol use contributes to the burden of non-communicable diseases. The World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control has been ratified by 180 parties, which represent 90 per cent of the global population. Still, more than 1.1 billion people, mostly men, consumed tobacco in 2015. The prevalence of smoking among those individuals 15 years of age and older dropped from 23 per cent in 2007 to 21 per cent in 2013. In 2016, the average consumption of pure alcohol was 6.4 litres per year per person among those individuals 15 years of age or older.
- Indoor and ambient air pollution is the greatest environmental health risk. Globally in 2012, household air pollution from cooking with unclean fuels or inefficient technologies led to an estimated 4.3 million deaths, while ambient air pollution from traffic, industrial sources, waste burning or residential fuel combustion resulted in an estimated 3 million deaths.

Other health risks

- In 2013, about 1.25 million people died from road traffic injuries, the leading cause of death among males between 15 and 29 years of age. Road traffic deaths have increased by about 13 per cent globally since 2000.
- Worldwide in 2015, an estimated 108,000 people died as a result of unintentional poisoning. That figure represents 1.5 deaths per 100,000 people, a 33 per cent decrease since 2000.

Health systems and funding

- In 2015, total official flows for medical research and basic health from all donor countries and multilateral organizations amounted to $9.7 billion, an increase in real terms of 30 per cent since 2010. Of that amount, the member countries of the Development Assistance Committee of OECD contributed $4.3 billion.
- Available data from 2005 to 2015 indicate that about half of all countries, including almost all the least developed countries, have fewer than 1 physician and fewer than 3 nurses or midwives per 1,000 people.

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

8. Achieving inclusive and equitable quality education for all will require increasing efforts, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia and for vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people, refugee children and poor children in rural areas.

- In 2014, about 2 in 3 children worldwide participated in pre-primary or primary education in the year prior to official entry age for primary school. However, in the least developed countries, the ratio was only 4 in 10.
- Despite considerable gains in education enrolment over the past 15 years, worldwide, the adjusted net enrolment rates were 91 per cent for primary education, 84 per cent for lower secondary education and 63 per cent for upper secondary education in 2014. About 263 million children and youth were out of school, including 61 million children of primary school age. Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia account for over 70 per cent of the global out-of-school population in primary and secondary education.
- Even though more children than ever are going to school, many do not acquire basic skills in reading and mathematics. Recent learning assessment studies show that in 9 of 24 sub-Saharan African countries and 6 of 15 Latin American countries with data, fewer than half of the students at the end of primary education had attained minimum proficiency levels in mathematics. In 6 of 24 sub-Saharan African countries with data, fewer than half of the students who finished their primary schooling had attained minimum proficiency levels in reading.
- Equity issues constitute a major challenge in education according to a recent assessment. In all countries with data, children from the richest 20 per cent of households achieved greater proficiency in reading at the end of their primary and lower secondary education than children from the poorest 20 per cent of households. In most countries with data, urban children scored higher in reading than rural children.
- The lack of trained teachers and the poor condition of schools in many parts of the world are jeopardizing prospects for quality education for all. Sub-Saharan Africa has a relatively low percentage of trained teachers in pre-primary, primary and secondary education (41 per cent, 72 per cent and 55 per cent, respectively). Moreover, the majority of schools in the region do not have access to electricity or potable water.
- On the basis of data from 65 developing countries, the average percentage of schools with access to computers and the Internet for teaching purposes is above 60 per cent in both primary and secondary education. However, the share is less than 40 per cent in more than half of sub-Saharan countries with data.
- Official development assistance (ODA) for scholarships amounted to $1 billion in 2015, a decrease from $1.2 billion in 2014. Australia, France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland were the largest contributors.

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

9. Gender inequality persists worldwide, depriving women and girls of their basic rights and opportunities. Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will require more vigorous efforts, including legal frameworks, to counter deeply rooted gender-based discrimination that often results from patriarchal attitudes and related social norms.

- On the basis of data from 2005 to 2016 for 87 countries, 19 per cent of women between 15 and 49 years of age said they had experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey. In the most extreme cases, such violence can lead to death. In 2012, almost half of all women who were victims of intentional homicide worldwide were killed by an intimate partner or family member, compared to 6 per cent of male victims.
- Child marriage is declining, but not fast enough. Around 1990, nearly 1 in 3 women between 20 and 24 years of age reported that they were married before 18 years of age. Around 2015, the ratio was just over 1 in 4. The decline is driven by an even steeper reduction in the marriage rate among girls under 15 years of age during that period.
- The harmful practice of female genital mutilation/cutting has declined by 30 per cent over the last three decades. Nevertheless, prevalence remains high in some of the 30 countries with representative data. In those countries, survey data from around 2015 indicate that more than 1 in 3 girls between 15 and 19 years of age have undergone the procedure compared to nearly 1 in 2 girls in the mid-1980s.
- The average amount of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work is more than threefold higher for women than men, according to survey data from 84 countries and areas. Available data indicate that time spent on domestic chores accounts for a large proportion of the gender gap in unpaid work.
- Globally, women's participation in single or lower houses of national parliaments reached 23.4 per cent in 2017, just 10 percentage points higher than in 2000. Such slow progress suggests that stronger political commitment and more ambitious measures and quotas are needed to boost women's political participation and empowerment.
- Women are still underrepresented in managerial positions. In the majority of the 67 countries with data from 2009 to 2015, fewer than a third of senior- and middle-management positions were held by women.
- Just over half (52 per cent) of women between 15 and 49 years of age who are married or in union make their own decisions about consensual sexual relations and use of contraceptives and health services. That statistic is based on available data from around 2012 for 45 countries, 43 of which are in developing regions.

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

10. Access to safe water and sanitation and sound management of freshwater ecosystems are essential to human health and to environmental sustainability and economic prosperity.

- In 2015, 6.6 billion people (over 90 per cent of the world's population) used improved drinking water sources and 4.9 billion people (over two thirds of the world's population) used improved sanitation facilities. In both cases, people without access live predominantly in rural areas. Achieving universal access to basic sanitation and ending the unsafe practice of open defecation will require substantial acceleration of progress in rural areas of Central and Southern Asia, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.
- Effective water and sanitation management relies on the participation of a range of stakeholders, including local communities. A 2016-2017 survey found that over 80 per cent of 74 responding countries had clearly defined procedures for engaging service users/communities in water and sanitation management.
- More than 2 billion people globally are living in countries with excess water stress, defined as the ratio of total freshwater withdrawn to total renewable freshwater resources above a threshold of 25 per cent. Northern Africa and Western Asia as well as Central and Southern Asia experience water stress levels above 60 per cent, which indicates the strong probability of future water scarcity.
- In 2012, 65 per cent of the 130 countries that responded to a survey on integrated water resources management reported that management plans were in place at the national level.
- ODA for the water sector has been rising steadily, but has remained relatively constant as a proportion of total ODA disbursements, at approximately 5 per cent since 2005. In 2015, ODA disbursements in the water sector totalled about $8.6 billion, which represents an increase of 67 per cent in real terms since 2005.

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

11. Progress in every area of sustainable energy falls short of what is needed to achieve energy access for all and to meet targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency. Meaningful improvements will require higher levels of financing and bolder policy commitments, together with the willingness of countries to embrace new technologies on a much wider scale.

- Globally, 85.3 per cent of the population had access to electricity in 2014, an increase of only 0.3 percentage points since 2012. That means that 1.1 billion people, predominantly rural dwellers, still function without electricity. Half of those people live in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking climbed to 57.4 per cent in 2014, up slightly from 56.5 per cent in 2012. More than 3 billion people, the majority of them in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, are still cooking without clean fuels and more efficient technologies.
- The share of renewable energy in final energy consumption grew modestly from 2012 to 2014, from 17.9 per cent to 18.3 per cent. Most of the increase was from renewable electricity from water, solar and wind power. Solar and wind power still make up a relatively minor share of energy consumption, despite their rapid growth in recent years. The challenge is to increase the share of renewable energy in the heat and transport sectors, which together account for 80 per cent of global energy consumption.

- From 2012 to 2014, three quarters of the world's 20 largest energy-consuming countries had reduced their energy intensity — the ratio of energy used per unit of GDP. The reduction was driven mainly by greater efficiencies in the industry and transport sectors. However, that progress is still not sufficient to meet the target of doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

12. Increasing labour productivity, reducing the unemployment rate, especially for young people, and improving access to financial services and benefits are essential components of sustained and inclusive economic growth.

- The average annual growth rate of real GDP per capita worldwide was 1.6 per cent from 2010 to 2015, compared to 0.9 per cent in 2005-2009. In the least developed countries, the per capita growth rate accelerated from 3.5 per cent in 2000-2004 to 4.6 per cent in 2005-2009, before slowing to 2.5 per cent in 2010-2015. Overall average annual GDP growth in the least developed countries followed a similar trend, decelerating from 7.1 per cent in 2005-2009 to 4.9 per cent in 2010-2015, below the Sustainable Development Goals target of 7 per cent.

- The growth of labour productivity (GDP per worker) globally has slowed from an average annual rate of 2.9 per cent from 2000 to 2008 to 1.9 per cent from 2009 to 2016. The slowdown represents a negative development for the global economy, with adverse effects on living standards and real wages.

- The global unemployment rate stood at 5.7 per cent in 2016, with women more likely to be unemployed than men across all age groups. Youth were almost three times as likely as adults to be unemployed, with unemployment rates of 12.8 per cent and 4.4 per cent, respectively, in 2016. Moreover, in more than 76 per cent of countries with data, more than 1 in 10 youth are neither in the educational system nor working. Young women are more likely than young men to fall into that category in almost 70 per cent of countries with data.

- While the number of children from 5 to 17 years of age who are working has declined from 246 million in 2000 to 168 million in 2012, child labour remains a serious concern. More than half of child labourers (85 million children) participate in hazardous work and 59 per cent of them work in the agricultural sector. Girls have made greater progress than boys, with the number of girls engaged in child labour declining by 40 per cent during the period 2000-2012, compared to a decline of 25 per cent for boys.

- Access to financial services enables individuals and firms to manage changes in income, deal with fluctuating cash flows, accumulate assets and make productive investments. Access to financial services through automated teller machines increased by 55 per cent worldwide from 2010 to 2015. Commercial bank branches grew by 5 per cent during the same period, with the lower growth explained by increased digital access to financial services. Globally, there were 60 automated teller machines and 17 commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults in 2015. From 2011 to 2014, 700 million adults became new account holders and the share of adults with an account at a financial institution increased from 51 per cent to 61 per cent.

- After contracting slightly in 2014, aid for trade rose 5.4 per cent in real terms to reach $53.9 billion in 2015 owing to a recovery in commitments for trade-

related infrastructure and further growth in support of banking and agriculture. Aid for trade commitments to the least developed countries increased in 2015 by $4.3 billion, reaching $17.2 billion. The Enhanced Integrated Framework, an aid-for-trade programme dedicated to those countries, started its second phase in 2016 and will run to 2022. Donor commitments to the Framework stood at $55.3 million in 2016, with $17.3 million already disbursed to the Trust Fund.

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

13. Despite steady improvements in manufacturing output and employment, renewed investment will be needed in the least developed countries to build needed infrastructure and ensure the doubling of industry's share of GDP in those countries by 2030.

- Efficient transportation services generate employment and wealth and drive economic development. In 2015, the estimated global economic impact (both direct and indirect) of air transport was $2.7 trillion, equivalent to 3.5 per cent of global GDP. The least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States represent far less air travel and freight volumes, with each country group accounting for only 1 per cent to 2.7 per cent of the global total.
- Manufacturing is a principal driver of economic development, employment and social stability. Globally, manufacturing value added as a share of GDP increased from 15.3 per cent in 2005 to 16.2 per cent in 2016. In 2016, manufacturing value added per capita amounted to $4,621 in Northern America and Europe, compared to about $100 in the least developed countries.
- As many countries move to more efficient and less energy-intensive industries, their emissions of carbon dioxide per unit of manufacturing value added are generally declining. From 2000 to 2014, Northern America and Europe reduced their emissions intensity by 36 per cent and Eastern Asia reduced its emissions intensity by 23 per cent. All of the 10 largest manufacturing countries saw decreases in their emissions intensity. Such promising trends are not reflected in the global emissions intensity level, however, since a significant share of global manufacturing value added has moved to countries with generally higher intensity levels.
- In 2014, investments in research and development stood at 1.7 per cent of global GDP, up from 1.5 per cent in 2000. Worldwide, there were 1,098 researchers per million inhabitants in 2014, ranging from 63 in the least developed countries to 3,500 in Northern America and Europe.
- ODA for economic infrastructure in developing countries reached $57 billion in 2015, an increase of 32 per cent in real terms since 2010. The main recipient sectors were transport and energy ($19 billion each).
- Manufacturing is increasingly shifting towards more technologically complex products. While medium- and high-tech products continue to dominate manufacturing production in industrialized economies (where they contribute about 80 per cent of total manufacturing output), the share has barely reached 10 per cent in least developed countries.
- Mobile-cellular services have spread rapidly and have allowed people living in previously unconnected areas to join the global information society. In 2016,

95 per cent of the world's population and 85 per cent of people in the least developed countries were covered by a mobile-cellular signal. However, only 29 per cent of rural populations had access to a mobile-broadband network.

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

14. Progress in reducing inequality within and among countries has been mixed. The voices of developing countries still need to be strengthened in decision-making forums of international economic and financial institutions. Moreover, while remittances can be a lifeline for families and communities of international migrant workers in their countries of origin, the high cost of transferring money continues to reduce such benefits.

- From 2008 to 2013, the per capita income or consumption of the poorest 40 per cent of the population improved more rapidly than the national average in 49 of 83 countries (accounting for three quarters of the world's population) with data.
- The International Monetary Fund, through its recent quota reform, has increased the share of developing countries' vote (defined as countries in developing regions, according to the M49 classification) to 37 per cent in 2016, up from 33 per cent in 2010. That increase is still short of the 74 per cent they represent in the membership. While the World Bank reforms of 2010 are still being implemented, that effort has not changed the 38 per cent share of voting rights at the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development that developing countries have held since 2000.
- Duty-free treatment and favourable access conditions for exports from least developed and developing countries have expanded. From 2005 to 2015, the proportion of tariff lines globally with duty-free treatment for products that originate in developing countries increased from 41 per cent to 50 per cent; for products that originate in the least developed countries, the proportion rose from 49 per cent to 65 per cent.
- The least developed countries and small island developing States continue to require additional assistance to ensure that they share in the benefits of sustainable development. In 2015, total resource flows to the least developed countries and small island developing States amounted to $48 billion and $6 billion, respectively. Eight donor countries met the target of 0.15 per cent of gross national income (GNI) for ODA to the least developed countries.
- The benefits of remittance from international migrant workers are reduced somewhat by the generally high cost of transfer. On average, post offices and money transfer operators charge over 6 per cent of the amount remitted; commercial banks charge 11 per cent. Both are significantly above the 3 per cent target. New and improved technologies, such as prepaid cards and mobile operators, result in lower fees for sending money home (between 2 per cent and 4 per cent), but are not yet widely available or used for many remittance corridors.

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

15. In recent decades, the world has experienced unprecedented urban growth. In 2015, close to 4 billion people — 54 per cent of the world's population — lived in cities and that number is projected to increase to about 5 billion people by 2030.

Rapid urbanization has brought enormous challenges, including growing numbers of slum dwellers, increased air pollution, inadequate basic services and infrastructure, and unplanned urban sprawl, which also make cities more vulnerable to disasters. Better urban planning and management are needed to make the world's urban spaces more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. As of 2016, more than 142 countries were developing national-level urban policies.

- The proportion of the urban population that lives in developing country slums fell from 39 per cent in 2000 to 30 per cent in 2014. Despite some gains, the absolute number of urban residents who live in slums continued to grow, owing in part to accelerating urbanization, population growth and lack of appropriate land and housing policies. In 2014, an estimated 880 million urban residents lived in slum conditions, compared to 792 million urban residents in 2000.

- As more and more people move to urban areas, cities typically expand their geographic boundaries to accommodate new inhabitants. From 2000 to 2015, in all regions of the world, the expansion of urban land outpaced the growth of urban populations. As a result, cities are becoming less dense as they grow, with unplanned urban sprawl challenging more sustainable patterns of urban development.

- The safe removal and management of solid waste represents one of the most vital urban environmental services. Uncollected solid waste blocks drains, causes flooding and may lead to the spread of water-borne diseases. On the basis of data from cities in 101 countries from 2009 to 2013, 65 per cent of the urban population was served by municipal waste collection.

- Air pollution is a major environmental health risk. In 2014, 9 of 10 people who live in cities were breathing air that did not comply with the safety standard set by WHO.

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

16. Achieving Goal 12 requires a strong national framework for sustainable consumption and production that is integrated into national and sectoral plans, sustainable business practices and consumer behaviour, together with adherence to international norms on the management of hazardous chemicals and wastes.

- Decoupling economic growth from natural resource use is fundamental to sustainable development. Global figures, however, point to worsening trends: domestic material consumption (the total amount of natural resources used in economic processes) increased from 1.51 kg to 1.73 kg per unit of GDP from 2000 to 2010. Total domestic material consumption also rose during the same period — from 48.7 billion tons to 71.1 billion tons. The increase is due in part to rising natural resource use worldwide, in particular in Eastern Asia.

- Countries continue to address challenges linked to air, soil and water pollution and exposure to toxic chemicals under the auspices of multilateral environmental agreements. Almost all States Members of the United Nations are party to at least one of those conventions. Under the conventions' obligations, countries are requested to regularly report data and information related to hazardous wastes, persistent organic pollutants and ozone depleting substances. However, from 2010 to 2014, only 57 per cent of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, 71 per cent of the parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous

Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and 51 per cent of the parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants provided the requested data and information. All parties reported to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

17. Planetary warming continued in 2016, setting a new record of about 1.1 degrees Centigrade above the preindustrial period, according to the *WMO* (World Meteorological Organization) *Statement on the State of the Global Climate in 2016*. In the Statement, WMO also noted that the extent of global sea ice fell to a minimum of 4.14 million km^2 in 2016, the second lowest extent on record. Atmospheric carbon dioxide levels also reached a record high of 400 parts per million that year. Mitigating climate change and its impacts will require building on the momentum achieved by the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which entered into force on 4 November 2016. Stronger efforts are needed to build resilience and limit climate-related hazards and natural disasters.

- Parties to the Paris Agreement are expected to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions. The nationally determined contributions reflect official country responses to climate change and contributions to global climate action. As of 20 April 2017, 143 parties ratified the Paris Agreement, of which 137 parties (136 countries and the European Commission) communicated their first nationally determined contributions to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

- As of 20 April 2017, seven developing countries successfully completed and submitted the first iteration of their national adaptation plans, in response to climate change.

- Developed countries have committed to jointly mobilizing $100 billion per year by 2020 to address the climate-related needs of developing countries and to continue that level of support through 2025. Initial efforts to mobilize resources for the Green Climate Fund raised $10.3 billion and developed-country parties are strongly urged to scale up their financial support.

- The number of deaths attributed to natural disasters continues to rise, despite progress in implementing disaster risk reduction strategies. From 1990 to 2015, more than 1.6 million people died in internationally reported natural disasters.

- Many countries have begun implementing national and local disaster risk reduction strategies. In 2014-2015, most reporting countries indicated that environmental impact assessments, legislation on protected areas, climate change adaptation projects and programmes, and integrated planning played a major role in reducing underlying risk factors.

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

18. The increasingly adverse impacts of climate change (including ocean acidification), overfishing and marine pollution are jeopardizing recent gains in protecting portions of the world's oceans.

- Global trends point to continued deterioration of coastal waters owing to pollution and eutrophication (excessive nutrients in water, frequently a result of run-off from land, which causes dense plant growth and the death of animal life from lack of oxygen). Of the 63 large marine ecosystems evaluated under the Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme, 16 per cent of the ecosystems are in the "high" or "highest" risk categories for coastal eutrophication. They are located mainly in Western Europe, Southern and Eastern Asia, and the Gulf of Mexico.

- Ocean acidification is closely linked to shifts in the carbonate chemistry of the waters, which can lead to a significant weakening of the shells and skeletons of many marine species (such as reef-building corals and shelled molluscs). Studies of marine acidity at open ocean and coastal sites around the world have indicated that current levels are often outside preindustrial bounds.

- Overfishing reduces food production, impairs the functioning of ecosystems and reduces biodiversity. The proportion of world marine fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels has declined from 90 per cent in 1974 to 68.6 per cent in 2013. However, the trend has slowed and appears to have stabilized from 2008 to 2013.

- Small-scale fisheries face numerous challenges. In response, about 70 per cent of the respondents to a survey representing 92 countries and the European Union have introduced or developed regulations, policies, laws, plans or strategies specifically targeting small-scale fisheries.

- When effectively managed and well resourced, marine protected areas are important mechanisms for safeguarding ocean life. In 2017, protected areas cover 13.2 per cent of the marine environment under national jurisdiction (up to 200 nautical miles from shore), 0.25 per cent of the marine environment beyond national jurisdiction and 5.3 per cent of the total global ocean area.

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

19. Progress in preserving and sustainably using the Earth's terrestrial species and ecosystems is uneven. The pace of forest loss has slowed and improvements continue to be made in managing forests sustainably and protecting areas important for biodiversity. However, declining trends in land productivity, biodiversity loss and poaching and trafficking of wildlife remain serious concerns.

- The net loss of forest continues to slow and forest biomass stock per hectare is stable. More forests are being protected and areas under long-term management plans and voluntary certification have increased. From 2010 to 2015, the annual net loss of forest area globally was less than half that of the 1990s. The proportion of land area covered by forest decreased from 31.6 per cent in 1990 to 30.8 per cent in 2010 and 30.6 per cent in 2015.

- Fifteen per cent of land is currently under protection, but that does not cover all areas important for biodiversity. Protecting key biodiversity areas is necessary to strengthen natural resource management and biodiversity conservation. From 2000 to 2017, average worldwide coverage of terrestrial, freshwater and mountain key biodiversity areas by protected areas increased from 35 per cent to 47 per cent, from 32 per cent to 43 per cent and from 39 per cent to 49 per cent, respectively.

- As of 2017, 76 per cent of the world's mountain areas are covered by some form of green vegetation, including forests, shrubs, grasses and crops. Green cover on mountains is lowest in Central Asia (31 per cent) and highest in Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) (98 per cent).
- From 1998 to 2013, about one fifth of the Earth's land surface covered by vegetation showed persistent and declining trends in productivity. South America and Africa are most affected.
- Biodiversity loss continues at an alarming rate according to the Red List Index. The extinction risk for corals is increasing most rapidly among all assessed species groups owing to the growing threat from climate change and local impacts. Chytrid fungal disease, another grave concern, is decimating many amphibian species and increasing their risk of extinction.
- Wildlife poaching and trafficking continues to thwart conservation efforts. Illicit wildlife markets are complex and subject to rapid fluctuations. Demand for a given wildlife product can grow quickly, before the international community can react. In 2013, elephant ivory, rosewood and rhinoceros horn comprised over 60 per cent of total wildlife and timber product seizures.
- The global community is committed to conserving biodiversity. Two international agreements aim at sharing the benefits from using genetic resources in a fair and equitable way. As of April 2017, 144 countries ratified the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and 96 countries ratified the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.
- In 2015, bilateral ODA in support of biodiversity amounted to $8.8 billion, an increase of 39 per cent in real terms over 2014.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

39. Violent conflicts have increased in recent years, while homicides have declined slowly and more citizens around the world have better access to justice. A few high-intensity armed conflicts are causing large numbers of civilian casualties. Progress promoting peace and justice, together with effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, remains uneven across and within regions.

- In 2015, between 5.2 persons and 6.7 persons per 100,000 persons worldwide were victims of intentional homicide. While the homicide rate has declined over the past decade, people in some countries located in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia face increased risk of intentional murder.
- Various forms of violence against children persist, including discipline that relies on physical punishment and psychological aggression. In 76 countries (most are developing countries) with available data from 2005 to 2016, about 8 in 10 children from 1 to 14 years of age were subjected to some form of psychological aggression and/or physical punishment on a regular basis.
- Countries have made solid progress in terms of detecting victims of trafficking in persons, as reflected by the increasing number of detected victims over the last decade. Globally, more women and girls than men and boys were identified as victims of trafficking in 2014. However, the share of women and girls has slowly retreated, from 84 per cent in 2004 to 71 per cent in 2014. While the share of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation has declined, the

proportion of those trafficked for forced labour has increased. More than 25 per cent of all trafficking victims detected in 2014 were children, with girls outnumbering boys (20 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, of total victims).

- Sexual violence is perhaps the most disturbing of children's rights violations. Underreporting and a lack of comparable data limit understanding of the full extent of the problem. In 35 low- and middle-income countries with data, the proportions of women between 18 and 29 years of age who experienced sexual violence for the first time before 18 years of age ranged from 9 per cent to 16 per cent.

- Rates of pretrial detention suggest that progress with respect to the rule of law and access to justice has been slow. Globally, the proportion of people held in detention without being sentenced for a crime has remained almost unchanged — from 32 per cent of total prisoners in 2003–2005 to 31 per cent in 2011–2015 — which indicates that substantive progress has not been achieved in the ability of judicial systems to process and try the accused in a fair and transparent manner.

- Opaque, burdensome and inefficient regulations and procedures nurture opportunities for corrupt officials to extract bribes or unofficial payments. In 2015, over 18 per cent of firms worldwide reported receiving at least one bribery payment request. The share of firms in low- and lower-middle-income countries totalled 25 per cent, compared to 4 per cent in high-income countries.

- To provide a sound basis for development, government budgets should be comprehensive, transparent and realistic. While expenditure in nearly 2 in 3 countries was within 10 per cent of their original national budgets, more than 1 in 7 countries deviated by at least 15 per cent. Nevertheless, budget reliability has improved over time, with about 8 in 10 countries in Southern Asia and Eastern Asia and the Pacific showing improvement.

- Birth registration is a first step towards safeguarding individual rights and providing every person with access to justice and social services. While many regions have reached universal or near universal birth registration, globally the average is just 71 per cent, on the basis of available country data reported from 2010 to 2016. Fewer than half (46 per cent) of all children under 5 years of age in sub-Saharan Africa have had their births registered.

- Legislation that calls for freedom of information has increased steadily, but slow or inefficient implementation of such laws remains a concern. More than 110 countries have adopted freedom of information legislation and policies. However, expert assessments suggest that 47 of those countries fall short of having clear legal provisions for exceptions to that right, while another 47 countries lack sufficient provisions for public education.

- Independent national human rights institutions play an important role in ensuring that States deliver on their human rights obligations and that no one is left behind. By the end of 2016, 37 per cent of countries had a national human rights institution that was compliant with internationally agreed standards (the Paris Principles), while 57 per cent of countries had been reviewed for compliance by their peers.

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

21. Despite some positive developments, a stronger commitment to partnership and cooperation is needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. That effort will require coherent policies, an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors and a reinvigorated Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

Finance

- In 2016, net ODA from member countries of the Development Assistance Committee of OECD rose by 8.9 per cent in real terms to $142.6 billion, reaching a new peak. ODA as a percentage of member countries' gross national income was 0.32 per cent, up from 0.30 per cent in 2015. The rise in aid spent on refugees in donor countries boosted the total. But even leaving aside refugee costs, aid rose 7.1 per cent. In 2016, Germany joined five other countries — Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom — in meeting a United Nations target to keep ODA at or above 0.7 per cent of gross national income.

- Remittances sent by international migrants to their home countries in the form of personal transfers and compensation of employees have a profound impact on individual families, communities and countries. In 2016, international remittances totalled $575 billion, 75 per cent ($429 billion) of which went to developing countries, according to the latest estimates.

Information and communications technology

- Fixed-broadband services remain largely unaffordable and unavailable throughout large segments of the developing world. In 2016, fixed-broadband penetration reached 30 per cent in developed regions, but only reached 8.2 per cent and 0.8 per cent in developing regions and the least developed countries, respectively. In developed regions, about 80 per cent of the population is online, compared to 40 per cent in developing regions and 15 per cent in the least developed countries. In 2016, the global rate of Internet user penetration was 12 per cent lower for women than men. The gender gap remains even larger in the least developed countries, at 31 per cent.

Capacity-building

- Total ODA for capacity-building and national planning stood at $21 billion in 2015. That amount represented 19 per cent of total aid allocable by sector, a proportion that has been stable since 2010. Of the total, sub-Saharan Africa received $5.6 billion and South and Central Asia received $4.2 billion. The main recipients of assistance were the public administration, environment and energy sectors, which together were provided with a total of $8.2 billion.

Trade

- During the past 15 years, developing regions have represented a growing share of international trade, with their world merchandise exports increasing from 31.1 per cent in 2001 to 44.6 per cent in 2015. Moreover, developing regions overall have maintained a trade surplus vis-á-vis the rest of the world. For the least developed countries, however, the share in world merchandise exports decreased from 1.1 per cent to 0.9 per cent from 2011 to 2015. Much of that change can be attributed to the fall in commodity prices.

- In 2015, average tariffs applied by developed countries to imports from the least developed countries remained stable at 0.9 per cent for agricultural products, 6.5 per cent for clothing and 3.2 per cent for textiles. Average tariffs applied by developed countries to imports from developing countries also remained largely unchanged in 2015.

Systemic issues

- In 2016, 125 countries engaged in country-led monitoring of development effectiveness, which demonstrates their commitment to strengthening implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and multi-stakeholder partnerships; 54 of those countries reported overall progress towards those commitments. Countries' own result frameworks were used to define 83 per cent of new interventions supported by donor countries in 2016.

Data, monitoring and accountability

- Nearly half of the countries or areas (81 of 154 countries) for which information is available were implementing national statistical plans in 2016. However, only 37 of 83 countries or areas with pertinent data had national statistical legislation in place that complied with all 10 Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

- In 2014, developing countries received $338 million in financial support for statistics. While that amount represented an increase of nearly 2.9 per cent from 2010, it accounted for only 0.18 per cent of total ODA. In order to meet the data requirements of the Sustainable Development Goals, developing countries will need an estimated $1 billion in statistical support annually from domestic and donor sources.

- Population and housing censuses are a primary source of disaggregated data needed to formulate, implement and monitor development policies and programmes. During the 10-year period from 2007 to 2016, 89 per cent of countries or areas around the world conducted at least one population and housing census, while 25 countries or areas did not have such a fundamental data source.

- During the period from 2010 to 2015, more than half (56 per cent) of the world's countries or areas (138 of 246 countries) had birth registration data that were at least 90 per cent complete. In sub-Saharan Africa, only 8 of 53 countries reached that level of coverage. During the same period, 144 countries or areas, or 59 per cent, had death registration data that were at least 75 per cent complete. In sub-Saharan Africa, only 9 in 53 countries met that standard. Even in countries with functioning civil registration systems, coverage of birth and death registration and complete reporting of vital statistics remain a challenge.